

COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES
JUNE 15, 2022

Attending: Steven Katz, Presiding; Kip Burgweger; Carol Burns; Ann Marie Hynes; Amy Jurkowitz; Ellen Wolfson

Unable
to Attend: James Dougherty

Staff: Lori Contadino; Laurette Helmrich

Guests: Jim Michael, Department of Public Works; Joseph Greco, The Greats (Greenwich Retired Eating And Tarrying Society); Kimberly Judge, newly appointed Office Assistant

Call To
Order: The meeting was called to order by Steven Katz at 8:30 a.m. The meeting was held in person

Minutes: Minutes of the May 18, 2022 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. A motion to approve the minutes as distributed was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

New Business:

Thank You to

Carol Burns: Today is Carol's last meeting as a member of the Commission on Aging. She was celebrated by a round of applause from all present. Steve Katz explained that a gift for Carol has been ordered but has not yet arrived. Carol spoke briefly, describing how she had enjoyed her terms on the Commission.

Old Business:

Greenwich Avenue Intersection
Improvement Project
at Arch Street &

Havemeyer Place: We were assisted by Jim Michael of the Department of Public Works who had previously presented this project to the Commission. Steve Katz explained that the Planning & Zoning Commission would be considering the project at its July 7 meeting and has requested the Commission's views on the project as it relates to older adults. He lead our discussion on the project. We are limiting our analysis to how the project affects the safety of older adults and are not addressing the project's cost, impact on trees, etc. Steve and Kip Burgweger had attended the meetings on the project held by the Representative Town Meeting and heard the views of opponents and proponents of the project. Steve had also emailed

several sources of information on the project and on the safety of bump-outs to Commission members. Steve reported that the opponents felt that not enough data had been collected to demonstrate that bump-outs work. The Arch Street & Havemeyer Place project did not really present a traffic issue, so bump-outs were not needed. Also, they would not be effective over time. Proponents took the position that pedestrian walking distances would be shortened by the bump-outs, and the reconfiguration of the streets would make it a more normal intersection. Steve also presented the Commission with a street design article that looked at New York City traffic calming and found that bump-outs with pedestrian islands actually worked. This was actual data on safety that the opponents had claimed was insufficient.

There followed a general discussion of the matter by Commission members. Carol Burns stated that she walks the Greenwich Avenue sidewalks frequently and found that pedestrians have better visibility and cars slow down. Steve then read an email from James Dougherty into the minutes as follows:

Good Morning. I would vote in favor of the COA supporting the project. I pass through this intersection several times a day and know that, due to its current offset configuration, it is not safe for either pedestrians or motorists. As the project is state funded, cost to the town is not an issue. Therefore I think the only consideration should be public safety and due to the location by the senior center, the safety of older adults. Re-configuring the intersection and adding the bump-outs seems the most permanent and cost effective means of increasing safety at this intersection. James Dougherty

Amy Jurkowitz asked when should pedestrians know to cross a street when vehicles and other pedestrians are all moving at the same time. Jim Michael stated that the traffic issue is reduced to the relationship between car drivers and pedestrians. Nothing will prevent the Town from installing traffic lights. However, pedestrians will be spending less time in the crossings and can make better eye contact with drivers. Steve Katz suggested adding signs stating that pedestrians have the right-of-way. Jim Michael noted that the Town has installed yield-to-pedestrians signs in crosswalks at Roger Sherman Baldwin Park. However, the Town must comply with federal sign regulations. Carol Burns described how intersections can get jammed when traffic is heavy. Jim Michael noted that at times the number of pedestrians can exceed the number of vehicles. It is very challenging to the Town to improve safety using the tools currently available. Shortening crossings makes pedestrians more visible. Ann Marie Hynes asked how to control vehicles turning right from Arch Street via the curve onto Greenwich Avenue. Jim Michael replied that there will be a speed bump and

a “Stop Ahead” sign in the curve. The Town may also paint a “Stop” sign on the pavement.

At this point in the meeting, we were joined by Kimberly Judge.

Steve Katz proposed that the Commission adopt a Sense of the Meeting Resolution (“SOMR”) that the Commission supports the installation of bump-outs at the Arch Street & Havemeyer Place intersection. After further discussion of the SOMR and its wording, the following SOMR was adopted by unanimous vote:

The Commission on Aging supports the Greenwich Avenue Intersection Improvement Project at Arch Street & Havemeyer Place as evidence suggests that curb extensions that include pedestrian plazas increase pedestrian safety.

Reports:

Department of Human Services & Nathaniel Witherell: Ellen Wolfson stated that there was nothing to report on these two agencies.

Southwestern CT Agency on Aging: Ann Marie Hynes reported that SWCAA has been developing a mission statement to address areas with lower levels of care. She read the present statement as follows: “SWCAA is the trusted source of advocacy, information, and access to care for older and vulnerable adults while boosting resources for the regional aging network.” Ann Marie continued that SWCAA is staffed pretty well. The allocation of resources including allocation of grant moneys to agency applicants is proceeding, and Board members are encouraged to participate. There are fewer grant requests this year than expected.

Friends of the Greenwich Senior Center: Ann Marie Hynes reported that there was nothing to report.

Senior Center Administrator: Laurette Helmrich reported that the Senior Center has come up with new lunch order forms. The new lunch order forms have been put into effect as well as the on line form. They have been well received by 99 percent of the people using them. They are being sent out to Senior Center members by Constant Contact and eventually will be on the website. Laurette and Lori Contadino went before the BET to request the transfer of \$40,000.00 into the food budget to finish out our fiscal year, and the new funds are being received.

Starting next month, we will be bringing back as many programs as we can accommodate in the space available. On September 22, 2022, we will be holding a fall celebration which will be an outside event held at Roger Sherman Baldwin Park.

Commission on Aging Director (L. Contadino)

Director's Report (L. Contadino): Lori Contadino delivered the Director's report. First, however, she introduced Kimberly Judge who is the new part time Office Assistant. Kimberly spoke briefly on her background and her interest in this new position. Her training as the content steward will begin next week. Lori also updated us on the Administrative Assistant position. Two candidates will be interviewed next week.

A water pipe burst in the ceiling in the room on the lower floor and leaked into the hallway, and a lot of stored stuff was lost. The room is drying out now.

There was a meeting last Friday with the Department of Human Services and Nathaniel Witherell Family Council. Larry Simon asked the Commission to communicate Witherell's contributions to the community and the need for volunteers. Lori has a radio broadcast and will be able to assist Witherell.

There was a meeting with Uber, and we learned that Uber could meet our to and from the Senior Center needs. Share the Fare may be able to use Uber utilizing a gift card method.

Students have been working with seniors for computer training at the Senior Center in one on one programs. Lori will be meeting Friday with a retired IBM executive who may be able to help us with technology and mobilizing our tech lounge.

We are readying the Health Insurance Health Council for October enrollment for Medicare counseling.

Lori has been approved individually for a Town credit card that can be used for Uber, Survey Monkey and other services that must generate vouchers.

Marketing: Amy Jurkowitz reported on marketing. There was a meeting with the head of the Town's IT Department. We are finalizing our brand name and arranging the use of a subsite that would work off the Town's website. We can work with the Town and do not need a subsite, but the Town will not approve headings until Kimberly is able to handle the site. There will be a meeting to demonstrate Kimberly's expertise. This all may take a month to get into shape.

299 Age Is Just A Number – We are still reviewing how to market what the Senior Center is and what we are.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. Seconded. Carried.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kip Burgweger
Acting Secretary